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EDUCATIONAL COUNCIL

✓ Iowa State Teachers' Association

Iowa state teachers' association

Report of Committee

on

School Credit for Bible Study, Religious
Instruction and Moral Training.

Des Moines, Iowa, November 2, 1916

Welch Press, Des Moines

LC406
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1916

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School Credit for Bible Study

Religious Instruction and Moral Training

After careful deliberation your Committee decided to confine its investigation and base its report upon the major topic of the assignment, viz., "School Credit for Bible Study." Several considerations lead to this conclusion. First, religious instruction and moral training are so closely allied to bible study that they may be considered as generic thereto. Second moral training in the public schools has already been discussed by sectional, state and national associations. Third, the field of religious education is being studied by the Religious Education Association, and its reports are accessible. Fourth, the immediate interest in our State centers in Bible Study, its promotion, its standardization, and its place with other cultural studies as affecting accreditation.

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

Your Committee, however, before taking up the main topic of its report wishes to declare itself as favoring the instruction of children by competent teachers under the direction of religious bodies. A free State means a free church and a free school. The home, the church, and the school are the three institutions whose function in a democracy is the making of worthy American citizens out of boys and girls. While church and state are not organically connected they are functionally related. The home should give the child a good physical inheritance and should train him in the primary habits of good conduct, industry and respect for authority. The church should culture insight into the significance of duty, reverence, worship, sin and salvation so that godliness may be his aim and worthiness his practice.

His religious belief rests with the home and the church. The function of the school is to train physically, mentally and morally all the powers of the growing child which make for good citizenship. It is by the work of this trinity of institutions that unity of purpose may be realized, and a larger place for education in religion and for religion in education be realized. It takes the correlated efforts of home breeding, school drilling and church training to make a good man out of the boy, and

whenever any of these factors fail to do its part the product is deficient.

The church schools which deal with pupils of elementary school age are being improved by the nation wide interest in a wiser selection of courses, the proper grading of the classes, the better equipping of class rooms and the demand for better teachers. The church should parallel the pupil's secular career with that religious instruction which meets the demand of modern pedagogy in matters of content, presentation, organization and equipment.

MORAL TRAINING

The American people believe that character-building is the great function of the public school. They recognize that the quality of citizenship determines the worth of the government. Under our system, whatever is best for each individual is best for the government. It is thus that individual worth becomes the single standard for measuring the merits of qualifying institutions. There are those who believe that the public school is deficient in training for morality. They hold that there should be a larger place for the study of elementary ethics, that good moral and refined manners should be cultured directly rather than be treated incidentally and accidentally. That along with physical hygiene should come moral and social hygiene, that ethical training and aesthetical appreciation are elements of "the good" in the inventory of the ideal citizen.

Morality depends upon two things: First, the ability to foresee and to weigh consequences, and second, the desire and power to exercise self control. This means the development of the moral judgment and the training of the will. Your Committee is of the opinion that there is a place in the school for the study of conduct. That the signification of patriotism, the duty of man to man, the relation of the individual to society and of society to the individual, the significance of law and authority in a republic and all that belongs to good behavior in American community life, that these should be taught in our public schools. Our tendency at present is to increase the number of subjects to be taught rather than to enrich and to stress the essential elements of the subjects already assigned.

A principle of education now obtains which gives credit for everything of a worthy nature which has been well done. If a teacher gives credit for doing chores at home, why not do so for "doing a good turn" to someone. If credit be given for worthy endeavor, then going to church and to Sabbath School, singing in the chorus, participation in the Easter exercises, and the public reading on Thanksgiving Day should receive consideration. Everything which affects developing life wholesomely

should be regarded. In such a system of credits the work of the church school is entitled to recognition in evaluating the merits of the child. Bible stories, narratives, psalms, orations, and essays wherever acquired are among the worthiest furnishings of the mind.

BIBLE STUDY

The Bible is the world's greatest book. A knowledge of its contents is a necessary part of common culture. Literature cannot be interpreted without it. Its history is one of the richest legacies of the race and its literature the loftiest in conception and the richest in variety. It conveys the worthiest ideals of all time and its spirit is the basis of social, moral and spiritual welfare. These convictions have wrought themselves into several specific forms of bible study promotion.

AGENCIES

Church Schools—Bible instruction in the church schools is being put upon a graded system, teachers are being selected and trained with reference to their personality, aptitudes and knowledge, so that the parochial schools and Sunday Schools are doing better work in religious instruction than ever before. The organized adult and senior Bible classes are pursuing systematic study with enthusiasm. In many churches classes convene in mid-week courses for a fuller and deeper study of selected portions.

It is to be regretted that a larger number of students are not attracted to Bible courses in the non-tax colleges. In many of these institutions such courses are compulsory and seem to lack the class interest which holds students to other courses. The church college has the privilege of making religious education attractive and of training its students for forms of service in the church school, so that upon his return to the home community he may be a promoter of moral and religious study and training.

Secular Schools—Many state institutions are now offering elective courses in religious education. As early as 1908 our own State University of Iowa worked out a plan with the local pastors of the several churches whereby they taught courses in Christian Ethics, the Literature and the History of the Bible and other correlated courses. Through this cooperative plan a large number of students were given credit for these studies which were placed upon the same basis as other college courses. Many normal schools allow credit for similar courses as students may group themselves together for such study under the direction of approved instructors.

In some high schools there are classes which meet regularly for Bible Study under the direction of one of the high school teachers or some instructor equally well qualified to give instruction. By this plan it is now possible in the Des Moines schools for a student to earn a unit of credit in Bible Study.

Municipal Schools—Through the free association of churches there have been established about two hundred fifty municipal schools of religious education in the United States. The Des Moines Sunday School Institute was the first of these plans to be put into operation. It has a regular faculty of approved instructors under the direction of a city board appointed by the Federation of Christian Churches. Its function is three fold: first, the study of the Bible; second, the study of the church schools, their function, organization and direction; third, the professional training of teachers.

COURSES OF STUDY

Three groups of courses are offered, as follows:

1. Biblical: a. Old Testament, b. Life of Christ, c. Apostolic Age, d. The Message of Jesus to Our Modern Life, e. A Survey Course in the Bible, f. Social Teachings of Jesus.
2. Departmental: a. Beginners, b. Primary, c. Junior, d. Intermediate, e. Senior, f. Adult, g. Practice Training.
3. Professional: a. Story Telling, b. Supervision and Management, c. The Modern Sunday School in Principle and Practice, d. Psychology, e. Principles of Religious Education.

REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATION

A diploma of graduation is issued to students completing three years' work in the Institute, provided the following conditions are fulfilled:

First. The student must have completed satisfactorily six full courses selected from the above groups.

Second. Not to exceed two-thirds of the work may be elected from any one group of courses.

Third. Lessons missed may be made up by examination or by such other tests as the instructors may require, but no student shall be graduated who has not attended four-fifths of all the Institute sessions for a period of three years.

TEACHER TRAINING CLASSES IN LOCAL SUNDAY SCHOOL

In order that new teachers may have opportunity for training, each school must maintain a teacher training class. To encourage the establishing of such classes, this Institute accredits towards the completion of its three-year course one

year's work done in the local Sunday School, provided the following conditions are met:

First. Textbooks and teachers must be approved by this Institute.

Second. The minimum equipment shall be: One set of Kent & Madsen maps, or equivalent; adequate blackboard space; one volume dictionary of the Bible (Hasting's preferred); one Hurlburt's Biblical Atlas; ten volumes of reference books suitable to text studied, approved by the Institute.

Third. A separate class room must be provided for the class.

Fourth. The recitation period shall be forty minutes in duration.

Fifth. The class shall hold at least 40 weekly sessions.

Sixth: The class shall not be confused with the workers, conference, which deals with the problems of the present school. It shall have in mind the interest of the future school.

Seventh. The entire year's work shall be devoted to one line of work. It is recommended that local schools attempt only the Biblical instruction, leaving the professional training to the Institute classes.

WEEKLY PROGRAM

The sessions of the Institute are held each Monday evening, beginning at 7:30 and closing at 9:15 o'clock. Two class periods and a brief devotional period are provided.

STATE PLANS

North Dakota—At the State Education Association of North Dakota in 1911, it was proposed that the State Board of Education authorize the preparation of a syllabus for individual or group use whereby students outside of regular school work could prepare themselves to pass examinations for high school credit. The High School Conference of the State approved of the plan in 1912 and gave its endorsement to the syllabus which had been prepared by a special committee. Some of the fundamental principles of the plan are as follows:

First—Religious instruction, as such, must not enter into the the syllabus or examination.

Second—Every suspicion of sectarianism or of anything suggesting it must be avoided. Accordingly no text book except the Bible itself shall be prescribed. Any version may be used; The Catholic may use the Douay version; the Protestant, the King James or the Revised Version.

Third—Partisanship must be avoided. There must be no insistence on any theory of authorship or any system of chronology.

Fourth—The work in both Old and New Testaments must be preceded by a careful study of Biblical geography.

Fifth—Attention must be called to the beauty of Biblical style by an insistence on the learning of a number of memory passages, in the choice of which, however, there shall be large latitude.

Sixth.—The work as a whole must amount to enough to occupy ninety hours of recitation besides the time for preparation, this being the amount of work usually required in order to secure a half-credit in the high schools.

The State Sunday School Association aided in inaugurating the plan by printing the syllabus and arousing interest in the work. For the first three years after the inauguration of the plan 513 papers were written out of which a total of 448 papers passed. Fifty-nine papers were sent in by Roman Catholic teachers.

Concerning this plan Dean Squires of the North Dakota State University says that the two greatest difficulties were the finding of suitable teachers, and getting boys and girls to do serious work. No new legislation was necessary. Practically all Christian denominations took part. The courses given were Old Testament narrative, Biblical History and Literature and Studies in the Life of Christ.

The following is the list of questions in Biblical History and Literature submitted by the State Board of Education, June, 1915:

BIBLICAL HISTORY AND LITERATURE
(One-Half Unit Credit)

(Answer any ten questions; each has a value of 10 per cent. Time, 180 minutes.)

I. Draw an outline map of Palestine, naming and locating by the number the scene of each of the following events:

- (1) The death of Moses.
- (2) The early home of David.
- (3) Solomon's capital.
- (4) The capital of the Kingdom of Israel.
- (5) Elijah's contest with the prophets of Baal.
- (6) The city in which Jesus grew to manhood.
- (7) The river in which Jesus was baptised.

- (8) The sea on which he stilled the storm.
- (9) The city near which Paul saw the vision which changed his life.
- (10) The city in which Paul was imprisoned for three years.

II. Tell the stories of the boyhood experiences of the four following: Jacob, Joseph, Samuel, David. Confine your accounts to the boyhood experiences.

III. Briefly tell the stories of the four following women: Jael, Ruth, Jezebel, Esther.

IV. Tell the story of the book of Job.

V. Tell the story of the book of Jonah.

VI. Write a memory passage from the Old Testament, at least 150 words in length.

VII. Describe the five following events in the life of Jesus: (1) His visit to the temple when twelve years old; (2) His baptism; (3) His temptation; (4) His transfiguration; (5) His triumphal entry.

VIII. Mention ten noteworthy places visited by Paul on his missionary journeys, telling briefly on which trip he visited the place and what happened there.

IX. What connection with the life and work of Paul did each of the following men have: Agrippa, Barnabas, Felix, Festus, John, Mark, Luke, Peter, Silas, Stephen, Timothy.

X. Name and classify twenty books in the Old Testament and twenty books in the New Testament.

XI. Write a memory passage from the New Testament, at least 150 words in length.

XII. Explain the Biblical allusion in each of the following quotations:

- (1) "He, who lone in Patmos banished,
Saw in the sun a mighty angel stand,
And heard great Babylon's doom pronounced by Heaven's command."
—Burns.
- (2) "I held it better men should perish one by one
Than that earth should stand at gaze like Joshua's Sun at
Ajalon."
—Tennyson.
- (3) "The airy hand confusion wrought,
Wrote, 'Mene, mene,' and divided quite
The kingdom of her thought."
—Tennyson.
- (4) "Lazarus left his charnel-cave
And home to Mary's house returned."
—Tennyson.
- (5) "He changes the self-satisfied Pharisee into the broken-hearted,
self-abased Publican."
—Newman.
- (6) "Known voices are as David's harp
Bewitching Saul's oppressive woes."
—Faber.
- (7-8) "Nor did Israel escape
The infection, when their borrowed gold composed
The calf in Oreb; and the rebel king
Doubled that sin in Bethel and in Dan."
—Milton.

- (9) "On him baptized
Heaven opened, and in likeness of a dove
The spirit descended." —Milton.
- (10) "So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high,
Through the dear might of Him that walked the waves."
—Milton.

Colorado Plan—The "Greeley Plan," inaugurated by a joint committee of students, faculty and local church leaders at the home of the Colorado State Normal School, served to awaken state wide interest in Bible Study. An attempt to modify it so that all of the high schools of the state might be served was made in 1911. It was discussed by the Educational Council and finally was brought before the General Association in 1913. The plan adopted provides for a four year elective course of study, the classes to be held in the several churches, preferably at the regular Sunday School hour. The church school must provide the class with a separate room, free from confusions, with black-board, maps, Bible dictionary, reference books and all equipment necessary to make such work efficient.

The plan in Colorado prescribes the standards of the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, viz., a forty-five minute recitation period exclusive of class interruption; one hour of preparation upon each lesson; teachers must possess acknowledged merit and be the possessor of a standard degree; in estimating the work done by the pupil the recitations and either note book or special assignment shall count as one-half, and the examination or thesis required by the state examiner shall count as one-half, the passing grade being the same as the local high school.

A joint State committee of examiners is provided, composed of representatives of the committee on Bible Study for high school from the State Teachers Association and a similar committee from the State Sunday School Association. Its function is to have general charge of bible study for academic credit, the adoption of a course of study, prescription of rules, the submission of questions and the grading of papers. Each student applying for credit pays a fee of twenty-five cents. All papers, notebooks, endorsements and recommendations are presented to the examiners without reference to the name or location of his church connection. The plan has wonderfully stimulated Bible Study and is highly satisfactory, especially in the larger cities.

Kansas Plan—In the Fall of 1914 the Kansas State Teachers' Association adopted the following resolution: "We wish to commend the giving of high school credit for the Study of the Bible outside of the school under competent teachers, and to promote and standardize such work, we recommend the appointment of a committee of five from this association."

This committee was appointed and is making its plans. The following statement is of interest as it gives the details of the administration of Bible Study for credit with high school students. The quotation is from the circular issued to the Topeka, Kansas, high school students.

“Credit toward graduation from high school will be allowed for Bible study under the following conditions:

1. The work offered for credit must have been taken either in the Bible study course offered by the Topeka Training School for Sunday School Workers, or with an approved teacher working in some Sunday School, or in the Young Women's Christian Association or the Young Men's Christian Association. Work successfully carried on in either of the courses announced upon pages 15 and 16 of the catalogue for 1914-1915 of the Topeka Training School for Sunday School Workers may be offered for credit. Other alternate equivalent courses, if such are proposed, will be considered, but thus far only those announced in the Training School catalogue have been suggested.

The Executive Committee of the Topeka Training School for Sunday School Workers will pass upon the qualifications of teachers who may be assigned to teach Bible Study courses which are intended to qualify high school students to offer the same for credit. The teachers of these Bible Study classes shall conform approximately to the recognized standard for high school teachers, namely: Minimum scholastic attainment of high school teachers shall be equivalent to graduation from a college belonging to the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools.

2. Only pupils eligible to membership in the high school should be enrolled in these Bible Study classes. Such pupils should conform to the high school standards concerning attendance, deportment, general attitude, and character of work done. Any high school student wishing to offer Bible Study work which he has done for credit toward graduation shall file a certificate (blanks will be provided for this purpose and may be secured of the high school principal) signed by the teacher with whom he has done this work, indicating the number and length of the lessons taken and the amount of time required in the preparation of each lesson and such other information as may be asked. This statement shall also evidence the scope of the work covered in the time certified. This certificate shall be countersigned by the superintendent of the Sunday School in which the instruction is given and also by the pastor of the church.

3. Upon the basis of the work covered by those asking for credit, an examination will be arranged, the same to be

conducted by a disinterested, competent student of the Bible, by which to test the thoroughness of the student's mastery of the work offered for credit. Only those students will be admitted to the examination whose signed credentials, notebooks, and other evidences required are such as would entitle them to credit, provided the examination is successfully passed. It is estimated that the courses outlined in the catalogue referred to above would require a semester and a half of work in a high school, the classes meeting daily for a total of one hundred and thirty-five days. Such work in other subjects in high school would entitle the student carrying it successfully, to one and one-half credits toward graduation. This amount of credit will be given to students carrying these courses satisfactorily as specified. Since such classes will meet normally but once per week, three years will be required to complete this course in Bible Study. Students carrying these courses should present their credentials for credit on Tuesday of the last week the high school is in session. Only those students who present evidence of sufficient work to entitle them to a half credit should ask for credit. No student whose record does not show that he has been in attendance upon at least forty class recitations need present any credentials for credit.

4. The following standards should be observed by teachers giving this course in Bible Study.

(1) A classroom where uninterrupted, thoughtful teaching may be expected must be provided.

(2) The recitation hour must be forty to forty-five minutes in length.

(3) The room should be properly lighted, heated, and ventilated, and should be equipped with a blackboard.

(4) The student should have access to the following reference books, or their equivalent:

Hastings' One-Volume Bible Dictionary (\$5.00).

Standard Bible Dictionary, published by Funk & Wagnalls. Authors, Jacobus, Nourse, and Zenos (\$6.00).

Young's Analytical Concordance (\$5.00).

History of the Hebrews, by Frank K. Sanders (\$1.25).

Ottley's Short History of the Hebrew People (\$1.25).

Holy Land in Geography, by MacCowan (50c).

5. They should also have the use of Kent & Madsen's Historical Maps for Bible Classes, or the equivalent of the same.

6. It is suggested that each student use the following 5½-inch by 8-inch maps in his notebook work:

Ancient World.

Journeyings of Children of Israel.

Canaan as Divided among Twelve Tribes.

Kingdoms of Israel and Judah.

Empire of David and Solomon.
Journeyings of Jesus in the Holy Land.
Journeyings of St. Paul.
Jerusalem in the Time of the Gospels.
Outline Map of Palestine."

By resolution of the Board of Education of Topeka, high school students may receive not to exceed a total of three credits toward graduation for work done outside of the high school; not more than two credits may be in any one subject. Catholic students who have had religious instruction as a part of their daily lessons, have heretofore been unable to receive credit for such work, even when coming from Catholic high schools. A year ago there were eight teachers conducting Bible courses in Topeka and over a hundred students enrolled therein.

Indiana Plan, et. al.—In January, 1914, the Indiana State Board of Education officially adopted a plan based upon the North Dakota and Colorado state plans. It allows school boards to give high school credits for Bible Study pursued outside of high school. The State of Washington took similar action. Oklahoma has appointed a committee consisting of the heads of the state normal schools to formulate a plan.

RESUME

It will thus be seen that in the matter of plans there is a lack of uniformity, varying from few regulations to standard regulations; from local initiation to state promotion. As to manner of granting credit there is no uniformity. City schools grant credit through local school regulations. North Dakota grants credit solely through examination, while other states prescribe teacher qualifications, et cetera, with examinations. As the matter of the place for Bible Study, the standardization of courses and the methods of accreditation are before two committees of national associations it will be seen that the whole matter is in an evolutionary state.

RECOMMENDATION—A TENTATIVE WORKING PLAN

Your Committee does not believe it would be wise to recommend for Iowa any single system of granting credit for Bible Study now in operation elsewhere. Our conditions are somewhat different from those found in other states, and our educational organization is peculiar. It is probable, also that any plan which might be regarded as satisfactory at present would prove inadequate shortly. Various bodies are working on the entire problem. Courses in Bible Study are likely to be defined with as much professional skill and exactness as are courses in history and language. With such definitions will come methods of administration suited to American conditions, bringing about

a reasonable unity through the modification and adaptation of the various tentative plans now in operation.

In view of the situation and deeming it desirable that Bible Study be given early recognition in this state your Committee recommends a working plan which is frankly tentative and intended to serve only until a more complete and satisfactory method is found.

1. The President of the State Teachers' Association shall appoint a committee of three well-known educators of this state who are recognized as proficient in Bible history or Bible literature, and one of whom is a teacher in a Roman Catholic College, Academy or high school and an adherent of the Roman Catholic faith.

This committee shall be known as the Bible Study Committee of the State Teachers' Association; it shall serve for one year and members shall be eligible for reappointment. Necessary expenses for not more than two meetings annually shall be paid from the treasury of the Association. From the same source shall be paid the cost of printing and circulating such syllabi, outlines, and lists of examination questions as may be authorized by the Association. The committee shall report annually to the Educational Council or to such other body of the State Teachers' Association as the Association shall designate. It shall represent the Association in such activities in connection with Bible Study as the Association shall see fit to develop, and it shall make such suggestions and recommendations as it shall deem expedient as the work proceeds.

This committee shall draw up syllabi for not to exceed four half-unit courses in Bible history and literature, basing such syllabi upon outlines already offered in other states for credit courses in Bible Study and found generally acceptable by the various religious organizations. After courses thus outlined have been approved as courses of standard secondary grade by the Board on Secondary School Relations of the Iowa State Board of Education, they shall be offered to the secondary schools, Bible schools, and churches of the State according to the following plan:

(a) Any regularly organized secondary school desiring to follow the syllabi in giving regular courses in Bible Study may do so, granting credit in the usual way.

(b) It is recommended that accredited secondary schools grant credit not to exceed two units in amount for Bible Study based upon these syllabi, when accomplished by their regular students in courses outside the secondary school, provided the Sunday School, church, or other organization desiring to offer such courses for credit shall meet the standards demanded of

accredited schools by the Iowa State Board of Education in regard to qualifications of teachers, library equipment for this subject, length of recitation periods, and definition of a unit. It is recommended that no credit be granted for work done in this way unless the conditions under which such work is carried forward have been approved by an Inspector of the Iowa State Board of Education.

(c) It is further recommended that credit not to exceed a total of two units and not to exceed one-half unit for any one student in any one year, be granted for work not done under conditions approved as specified in (b), provided the applicant for credit, a regular student in the secondary school in which credit is sought, gives evidence by examination as hereinafter provided, of proficiency in the history and literature of the Bible.

Not later than May first of each year, the committee on Bible Study of the Iowa State Teachers' Association shall submit to the Inspector of Schools of the Iowa State Board of Education, lists of examination questions covering the half-unit courses which may be in use in the state in that year. If any accredited secondary school desires to give its students opportunity to receive credit for work in Bible Study not done under conditions approved as provided in (b), it may apply to the Inspector of the State Board of Education for the proper list or lists of examination questions and may conduct examinations for credit in Bible Study on the day set by the Inspector for the uniform college entrance examination of graduates of unaccredited schools, and under the conditions fixed for such examination. But the papers shall be read under the direction of the principal of the school in which credit is sought and credit granted or withheld as the results of the examination may warrant.

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